

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested. Claims 1-11 are pending in the present application. Claims 1, 4, 8, 9 and 11 are amended by way of the present response. Applicant submits that upon entry of the present Reply, claims 1-11 are in condition for allowance. Moreover, the Applicants submit that no new matter has been introduced by the foregoing amendments.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103

In the outstanding Action, claims 1-4, 6-8, 10 and 11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over U. S. Patent No. 7,184,430 to Schessel et al. ("Schessel") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,292,479 to Bartholomew, et al. ("Bartholomew"). Additionally, claims 5 and 9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Schessel and Bartholomew in further view of U.S. Patent No. 6,285,671 to Bossemeyer, Jr. et al. ("Bossemeyer").

Addressing now the rejection of Claims 1-4, 6-8, 10 and 11 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Schessel in view of Bartholomew, these rejections are respectfully traversed. Claims 1, 4, 8 and 11 have been amended to overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

Independent claim 1 has been amended to recite:

"communication line type dependent signal processing unit operable in the phone switching station side to perform the signal processing in accordance with the type of the communication line, and to perform voice communication with said telephone equipment through said communication line," and

"a TDSW module that serves to perform a time division multiplexing process in order to input the voice signals to the subscriber line exchange."¹

¹ Support for this amendment may be found, for example, on page 11, lines 3-18 of the present application.

Independent claims 4 and 8 have been amended to included similar subject matter.² None of the cited references, either alone or in combination, teach or suggest the device, system or method which is being claimed, which includes the utilization of a communication line type dependent signal processing unit operable in the phone switching station side to perform signal processing in accordance with the type of the communication line and a TDSW module for time division multiplexing in order to input voice signals to a subscriber line exchange.

Schessel discloses a gateway device placed on the site of a phone switching station having a subscriber line unit, an identifier generation unit, a conversion unit and a packet transmitter.³ Schessel does not, however, teach or suggest any methodology or structure for simultaneously receiving multiple signals from a plurality of lines onto a single line. Specifically, Schessel is silent regarding signal processing in accordance with the type of communication line over which a signal is transmitted. Instead, Schessel teaches only of an "IP network interface for converting between a central office protocol and an IP protocol."⁴ Additionally, Schessel is silent regarding time division switch multiplexing (TDSW) of the input voice signals to a subscriber line exchange. Schessel discloses only a call processor that determines the features or administration associated with an incoming call.⁵

Further, as acknowledged by the outstanding office action on page 3, Schessel fails to describe or suggest a voice communication unit operable to perform voice communication with the telephone equipment through the communication line. Bartholomew, however, arguably discloses a gateway device that is able to perform telephony functions including speech functions

² Support for these amendments may be found, for example, on page 11, lines 3-18 of the present application.

³ See Schessel, Col. 5 and Fig. 5B.

⁴ *ibid*, Col. 2, lines 52-54.

⁵ *ibid*, Col. 5, lines 52-57.

in Col. 9. Bartholomew, however, does not disclose or suggest any signal processing in accordance with the type of communication line over which a signal is transmitted or the time division switch multiplexing of the input voice signals to a subscriber line exchange. Rather, Bartholomew describes only the routing of a signal through a telephonic gateway.⁶

Therefore, neither Schessel nor Bartholomew, either alone or in combination, disclose or suggest "a communication line type dependent signal processing unit operable to perform the signal processing in accordance with the type of communication line, and to perform voice communication with said telephone equipment through said communication line." Further, neither Schessel nor Bartholomew, nor any combination thereof, disclose or suggest, "a TDSW module that serves to perform a time division multiplexing process in order to input the voice signals to the subscriber line exchange."

Consequently, the Examiner's rejection of independent claims 1, 4 and 8 under 35 U.S.C. §103 is respectfully requested to be withdrawn. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully traverse, and request reconsideration of, these rejections based on these patents.⁷ Further, in light of the above discussion and in view of the present amendment, claims 2-4, 6-8 and 10-11, which are dependent on base claims 1, 4 and 8, respectively, are also believed to be in condition for allowance.

Addressing now the rejection of dependent claims 5 and 9 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Schessel and Bartholomew in further view of Bossemeyer, these rejections are respectfully traversed. Dependent claims 5 and 9 incorporate all of the limitations of

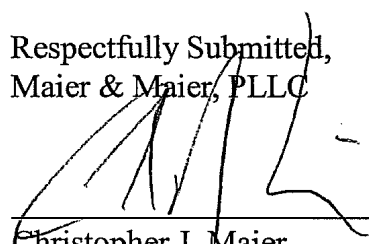
⁶ See Bartholomew, col. 9, line 48 through col. 10, line 33 and Fig. 4.

⁷ See MPEP 2142 stating, as one of the three "basic criteria [that] must be met" in order to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, that "the prior art reference (or references when combined) must teach or suggest all the claim limitations," (emphasis added). See also MPEP 2143.03: "All words in a claim must be considered in judging the patentability of that claim against the prior art."

independent claims 4 and 8, respectively and are therefore patentable over Schessel, Bartholomew and Bossemeyer for at least the same reasons detailed above.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment and in light of the above discussion, the outstanding grounds of rejection are believed to have been overcome. The application, as amended, is believed to be in condition of allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully Submitted,
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